

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.
2. Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Neil S. Bartfeld (applicant's representative) on February 24, 2010.
3. The application has been amended as follows:

Cancel *Claim 5*.

In *Claim 6*, line 1, replace "The negative resist composition according to claim 1, which is used in a" with --- A ---.

In *Claim 6*, on the last line, insert --- , wherein the resist layer is formed from the negative resist composition according to claim 1 --- between "mask" and the period.

In *Claim 7*, line 1, replace "The negative resist composition according to claim 1, which is used in a" with --- A ---.

In *Claim 7*, on the last line, change "the resist pattern" to --- a resist pattern ---.

In *Claim 7*, on the last line, insert --- , wherein the resist pattern is formed from the negative resist composition according to claim 1 --- between "mask" and the period.

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In *Claim 8*, line 1, replace "The negative resist composition according to claim 1, which is used in a" with --- A ---.

In *Claim 8*, on the last line, insert ---, wherein the resist pattern is formed from the negative resist composition according to claim 1 --- between "film pattern" and the period.

In *Claim 9*, line 1, replace "The negative resist composition according to claim 1, which is used in a" with --- A ---.

In *Claim 9*, on the last line, insert ---, wherein the resist layer is formed from the negative resist composition according to claim 1 --- between "exposure" and the period.

4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: Neither Lin et al'734 nor Gronbeck et al'899 teaches or suggests present combination of an oxime sulfonate-based acid generator (B) and an ethyleneurea-based crosslinking agent (C), or a combination of a mixture of an oxime sulfonate-based acid generator and a diazomethane-based acid generator (B) and an ethyleneurea-based crosslinking agent (C), as presently required in claim 1.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sin J. Lee whose telephone number is 571-

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272-1333. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 9:00 am EST to 5:30 pm EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Cynthia Kelly, can be reached on 571-272-1526. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is **571-273-8300**.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Sin J. Lee/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1795
February 25, 2010